



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

Salesian Province of St. Joseph, Hyderabad



INH/TVB/CIR 17/2021

MARCH 2021

St Joseph - The man in the shadows

Dear Confreres,

Fraternal greetings from Don Bosco Provincial House, Hyderabad. We are in the month of March, a month dedicated to St Joseph, the patron of our Province. Pope Francis has declared this year as the 'Year of St Joseph', through his Apostolic Letter, *Patris Corde* (With a Father's Heart). The year of St Joseph commenced on 8 December 2020 and it will end on 8 December 2021. Pope Francis has invited us to reflect on St Joseph, marking 150th anniversary of the proclamation of St Joseph as the patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX in 1870. It is an opportunity for us to revive our love for the patron of our province.

St Joseph is considered as 'the man in the shadows.' Even though St Joseph himself chose to live a discreet and an obscure life, yet he is a powerful example of sublime love, unfathomable tenderness and sensitivity, tireless hard work, unconditional obedience, unfaltering fidelity, and complete trust. Let us strive to make St Joseph come alive in our personal lives and in our communities.

In the Gospels, we learn that St Joseph welcomed the mystery of incarnation and offered himself completely to be guided by God, never putting himself at the centre. Joseph was a lowly carpenter (Mt 13:55), betrothed to Mary (Mt 1:18; Lk 1:27). He was a "just man" (Mt 1:19). Joseph was deeply troubled by Mary's mysterious pregnancy. He did not want to "expose her to public disgrace", so he decided to "dismiss her quietly" (Mt 1:19). He was ever ready to carry out God's will as revealed to him in the Law (Lk 2:22ff) and through four dreams (Mt 1:20; 2:13,19,22). After a long and tiring journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, he beheld the birth of the Messiah in a stable, since "there was no place for them" (Lk 2:7). He witnessed the adoration of the shepherds (Lk 2:8-20) and the Magi (Mt 2:1-12), who represented respectively the people of Israel and the pagans. Joseph had the courage to become the legal father of Jesus, to whom he gave the name revealed by the angel: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). Joseph and Mary offered their child to the Lord and listened with amazement to Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus and his Mother (Lk 2:22-35). Joseph flees to Egypt taking Jesus and Mary to protect the child (cf. Mt 2:13-18). When Jesus was lost at the age of 12, Joseph and Mary anxiously sought him out and they found him in the Temple (Lk 2:41-50).

In the history of the Church we can trace a gradual growth in the devotion to St Joseph. Up to the 15th century, Joseph was given a lowly place in preference to Mary. In the 15th century, Pope Sixtus V decreed March 19th to be the feast day of St Joseph. Pope Pius IX declared St Joseph as the patron of the Universal Church in 1870. On 1 May 1955, Pope Pius XII addressing the general crowd and the ACLI (Italian Association of Christian Workers) who gathered on that Sunday

announced the establishment of the liturgical Feast of St Joseph the Worker to be celebrated on 1 May. He declared, "We are pleased to announce to you Our determination to establish -- and we in fact establish -- the liturgical feast of St Joseph the Worker, assigning to it the precise date of 1 May. Dear workers, are you happy about Our gift? We are certain that you are because the humble artisan of Nazareth not only personifies the dignity of the worker before God and the Holy Church, but he is also always the provident guardian of you and your families."

Pope John XXIII entrusted the Second Vatican Council to Jesus' earthly "daddy" expressed in his Apostolic Letter *Le Voci* in 1961. On 13 November 1962, Pope John XXIII had established that his name be inserted into the Roman Canon, alongside Mary's name. Pope St John Paul had special devotion to St Joseph, which was beautifully portrayed in his Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Custos*, published on 15 August 1989. He explored every aspect of St Joseph's life. Sensitive to the vocation of Christian marriage, he offered it the example of the holy couple from Nazareth: the grace of living together with the charism of virginity and the gift of matrimony. In 1996 general audience the Pope affirmed the greatness of St Joseph, "The difficulty of approaching the sublime mystery of their spousal communion has led some, since the second century, to attribute an advanced age to Joseph and to consider him as a guardian, instead of as Mary's husband. Rather, it is appropriate to suppose that he was not an elderly man, but that his interior perfection, a consequence of grace, led him to live his spousal relationship with Mary with virginal affection." Pope John Paul II honored St Joseph as the 'Guardian of the Redeemer.' Confirming Pope Benedict XVI's desire, Pope Francis decreed on 1 May 2013 that the name of St Joseph, the Spouse of Mary, be added in Eucharistic Prayers II, III and IV.

Patris Corde is written against the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Many 'ordinary' people have sacrificed their lives in saving others during the pandemic. They resemble St Joseph, who collaborated in the divine plan in a most humble and discreet way. Pope Francis describes seven sublime qualities of St Joseph. I propose to have a Salesian reading of *Patris Corde*. It presents the great qualities of a father full of love and kindness. We read in article 9 of our Constitutions that Don Bosco has entrusted our Society to Mary our principal patroness as well as to St Joseph. With St Joseph, a Salesian is called to be a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a father who is creatively courageous, a working father and a father in the shadows.

1. A beloved father

The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. St Paul VI pointed out that St Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood by his sacrificial service in bringing up Jesus. Article 15 of our Constitutions reminds us that the Salesian needs to have the love of a father, brother and friend in accompanying young people.

2. A tender and loving father

St Joseph accompanied Jesus as he grew in wisdom and in divine and human favour (Lk 2:52). Joseph taught Jesus to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him (Hos 11:3-4). In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God. The Salesian is open, cordial, ready to make the first approach and to welcome others with unflinching kindness, respect and patience. (Const.15) "Our vocation is graced by a special gift of God: predilection for the young: "That you are young is enough to make me love you very much." (Const.14)

3. An obedient father

In every situation, St Joseph declared his own "fiat", like that of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. In his role as the head of a family, Joseph taught Jesus to be obedient to his parents (Lk2:51), in accordance with God's command (Ex 20:12).

Our Constitutions invite us to emulate Christ's obedience to the Father. He came on earth not to do his will but of his Father (Const. 64) "Sometimes obedience will clash with our own selfish attitudes and desires for independence, or may really test our love" (Const. 71), yet the Salesian obeys with faith. "...Submissive to the bidding of the Spirit we are resolved to carry out the Founder's apostolic plan in a specific form of religious life: to be in the Church signs and bearers of the love of God for young people, especially those who are poor" (Const. 2).

4. An accepting father

St Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally. He trusted in the angel's words. "Today, in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man. Even though he does not understand the bigger picture, he makes a decision to protect Mary's good name, her dignity and her life. In his hesitation about how best to act, God helped him by enlightening his judgment". He set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history. St Joseph's attitude encourages us to accept and welcome others as they are, without exception, and to show special concern for the weak, for God chooses what is weak (1 Cor 1:27).

As St Joseph accepts Mary, we are called to accept the young to whom we are sent. "With Don Bosco we reaffirm our preference for the young who are "poor, abandoned and in danger", those who have greater need of love and evangelization, and we work especially in areas of greatest poverty." (Const. 26)

5. A father who is creatively courageous

In the face of difficulty, we can either give up and walk away or somehow engage with it. At times, difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had. St Joseph was a great example of this creative courage. St Joseph took a stable and turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God come into the world. The carpenter of Nazareth, was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in the divine providence. That kind of creative courage was shown by the friends of the paralytic, who lowered him from the roof in order to bring him to Jesus (Lk 5:17-26).

As Salesians, we are called to take initiatives, be creative and adapt to new situations. "The Salesian is called to be a realist and to be attentive to the signs of the times, convinced that the Lord manifests his will also through the demands of time and place... Timely response to these needs requires him to keep abreast of new trends and meet them with the well-balanced creativity of the Founder..." (Const.19)

6. A working father

An aspect of St Joseph that has been emphasized from the time of the first social Encyclical, Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, is his relation to work. Saint Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labour. In our own day, when employment has once more become a burning social issue, and unemployment at times reaches record levels even in nations that for decades have enjoyed a certain degree of prosperity, there is a renewed need to appreciate the importance of dignified work, of which St Joseph is an exemplary patron. Working persons, whatever their job may be, are cooperating with God himself, and in some way become creators of the world around us.

Don Bosco himself was an assiduous worker. "Unremitting and self-sacrificing work is a characteristic left us by Don Bosco, and is a concrete expression of our poverty. In our daily labors we are at one with the poor who live by the sweat of their brow and we bear witness to the human and Christian value of work." (Cont. 78) Don Bosco reminds us that "Work and temperance will make the Congregation flourish, whereas the seeking of an easy and comfortable life will instead bring about its death." (Cons.18)

7. A father in the shadows

St Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father: he watched over Jesus and protected Him. The Polish writer Jan Dobraczy ski, in his book *The Shadow of the Father*, tells the story of St Joseph's life in the form of a novel. He uses the evocative image of a shadow to define Joseph. St Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift. In him, we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust.

Article 17 of our Constitutions presents this character of the Salesian. He does not give way to discouragement in face of difficulties, because he has complete trust in the Father. A Salesian does not look for the limelight: "The salesian gives himself to his mission with tireless energy, taking care to do everything with simplicity and moderation. He knows that by his work he is participating in the creative action of God and cooperating with Christ in building the Kingdom." (Const.18)

Jesus entered the world "in a state of great vulnerability" and Joseph had to defend, protect and care for Him. As Salesians, we are called to do the same. We are to see Jesus in the countless poor young persons who are entrusted to our care and we are to invite, defend, protect and care for them. God has used St Joseph to achieve His divine purpose. The very same God continues to use us too. We must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture. Joseph is a fine example of surrendering to God's will. He shows us how to accept and embrace God's plans with hope and courage, even when we do not understand them immediately. St Joseph is the patron of every vulnerable child who needs care, protection and development. This is truly the Salesian charism. May St Joseph help us and teach us to take care of the young effectively, loving them with a father's heart. May this year of St Joseph be a year of blessing for each one of us to emulate the virtues of this Incredible Silent Wonder Worker!

LAUDATO SI' THIS MONTH - MARCH

TEN GREEN COMMANDMENTS OF LAUDATO SI' - Green Commandment VIII - Educate towards Ecological Citizenship

In this month of March, let us focus our attention on the 8th Green Commandment, which is about ecological education while the question of ecological spirituality will be taken up in the next one. As the crisis of our common home is caused by human activities, we stand in need of a radical change in our consumption driven lifestyles which is taking a heavy toll on the sustainability of our planetary home. Such deep changes can be brought about only through education. Ecological education should include a radical critique of the dominant cultural paradigms guiding our contemporary society, namely, rampant individualism and a mechanistic vision of the natural world. We need a holistic education that can re-establish harmony with nature, our fellow human beings and the Transcendent. The Pope also speaks of the variety of settings for ecological education: schools, families, media, catechesis, houses of religious formation, etc.

Holistic education, according to the Pope, should lead to a peaceful coexistence with the natural world, our fellow human beings, and ultimately our very Creator. Unfortunately, educational training imparted in schools and universities often continues to promote a relationship of dualistic divide between humanity and the rest of the natural world. Such a dualistic divide is rooted in the epistemological separation of the self and object inherited from Modernity.

A holistic educational curriculum educates students to become responsible members of the wider human community and citizens of the biotic community. As Pope Francis writes: "there is nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle." Ecological education entails simple and concrete measures of caring for the natural world which is our common home.

Laudato Si' points to the direction of ecological education today as re-establishing harmony with the natural world, fellow human beings and the Creator. Such a holistic approach towards education is vital for the protection of our common planetary home in the context of the contemporary ecological crisis.

POPE'S INITIATIVES

Pope Francis proclaims World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

Pope Francis announced the establishment of an international day to honor grandparents and the elderly to take place each year in July. "The Holy Spirit ... arouses thoughts and words of wisdom in the elderly today: their voice is precious because it sings the praises of God and guards the roots of peoples. They remind us that old age is a gift and that grandparents are the link between generations, to transmit to young people an experience of life and faith," Pope Francis said.

Pope Francis adds feast of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus to Church calendar

Pope Francis added the memorial of Sts. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus to the General Roman Calendar, giving the siblings the combined feast day on July 29. A decree from the Congregation for Divine Worship said on Feb. 2 that Pope Francis had included the three saints in the General Roman Calendar "considering the important evangelical witness they offered in welcoming the Lord Jesus into their home, in listening to him attentively, in believing that he is the resurrection and the life."

EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY SENDING

Missionary sending is traditionally done in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin at the end of September. Due to Covid-19, the missionary dispatch of the 151st Missionary Expedition was postponed. As the health situation continues to be precarious, an "Extraordinary Missionary Sending" was thought of. It is extraordinary because it was celebrated in the chapel of the Salesian Headquarters and because not all the members of the expedition were physically present, but the missionary spirit was the same that animated all the missionary expeditions.

On February 01, 2021, the Rector Major Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, presided over the Eucharist and blessed the missionary crosses and gave them to the 2 Salesian missionaries present, while another 22 are in their respective countries, waiting for the cross and the visa to leave for their mission lands. There are 24 new Salesian missionaries on this 151st expedition.

The crosses will now be sent to the Provinces of the missionaries, where the Provincials, in the name of the Rector Major will hand them over to the missionaries in the course of simple celebrations. They will thus leave from their own Provinces for their mission destinations, according to the possibilities and according to the health protocols of the various countries. In the meantime, the preparatory process for the selection of the members of the 152nd Salesian missionary expedition begins in September 2021.

RECTOR MAJOR'S - "One father, one family"

On the feast day of Don Bosco, the book "One father, one family", published by the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, was officially released. The work collects photographs and texts that narrate the vast work done by the Salesian Family around the world in response to the corona virus pandemic.

The book offers many photographs of what happened, especially over the first six months. It contains photos of Salesians and members of the Salesian Family in action, giving concrete answers to people's needs. They distributed food, masks and sanitary items when local governments were unable to provide them adequately; they ensured the continuity of education with the use of the latest technologies available; they gave psychological, spiritual and religious support to young people and families.

The book contains hundreds of photos of these services, carried out in 121 countries. There are also brief reflections on the various aspects of the crisis and on the Salesian response to them, as well as an overview of what has been done, the processes followed, some statistics of what has been achieved in the first six months and a list of partners, both local and international. This small collection is respectfully dedicated to the martyrs and heroes, known and unknown, of the Salesian Family, who have worked against the corona virus. Copies of the book in English can currently be ordered from the Sector for the Salesian Missions.

PUBLICATIONS FROM FORMATION DEPARTMENT

The Formation Department of the Salesian Congregation released two important publications on Salesian meditation. Fr Ivo Coelho, General Councilor for Formation, presents the two texts to the Provincials and Provincial Delegates for Formation. The two publications - The Practice of Meditation in the Prayer of the Salesians of Don Bosco- are a fruit of a seminar organized by the Formation Sector in Rome, 10-12 May 2018. The aim of the seminar was to clarify the place of

meditation in the tradition and life of the Salesians of Don Bosco and to offer guidelines in this area. Three fundamental questions were asked: what is Salesian meditation? Why should we meditate? And how do we meditate? To our pleasant surprise, the seminar had surprisingly positive echoes from around the Salesian world, and not only from those involved in initiating young novices and Salesians into the art of meditation.

The practice of meditation, as Don Bosco saw, is fundamental to our vocational fidelity and to our mission. Our Constitutions put it beautifully: "For us mental prayer is essential. It strengthens our intimate union with God, saves us from routine, keeps our heart free and fosters our dedication to others. For Don Bosco it is a guarantee of joyous perseverance in our vocation." (C 93)

Let us hope that this work will serve to awaken a renewed interest in and appreciation of the very important element of Salesian prayer that is our daily meditation. The season of Lent that we have begun is a favorable time to listen to and meditate on the Word, which calls and moves us to conversion. You may find the digital copies of these two publications attached along with this circular.

ECONOMERS' MEET 2021

A two-day South Asia Economers' Meet took place at Don Bosco Provincial House, Okhla, New Delhi on February 22-23, 2021. Fr. Biju Michael, Regional Councillor of South Asia, Fr. Davis Maniparamben, Provincial of New Delhi Province, and eleven Provincial Economers participated in the meeting hosted by Delhi Province and coordinated by Fr. Amaladoss Samson, Coordinator of Economers' Forum South Asia.

Fr. Biju Michael highlighted the role of Provincial Economers in transforming systems and recalled their attention to the centre of the Salesian charism. He stated: "Any organized human system, like our SDB Congregation, is a complex system that is formed of four fundamental components such as purpose, organization, process and resources. The purpose should be something that is shared and inspirational. When many intelligences focus on a unified purpose, the impossible begins to evolve." Bro. Jean Paul Muller, Economist General, in an online meeting, presented the Priorities of the Rector Major and the General Council for the six-year period from 2020 to 2026. Mr. Joselyn Martin, Auditor, addressed the Economers in the evening session and clarified their doubts. I thank Fr Androth Jose for representing our Province at Economers' Meet and for all the efforts he makes to create systems and processes towards greater transparency and accountability in financial administration.

SPCSA COUNCIL AND ASSEMBLY

I attended the SPCSA council and assembly from February 25 to March 01, 2021 which was chaired by our regional for South Asia, Fr Biju Michael at the Salesian Provincial House, Bangalore. While all the provincials were present for the meeting, Fr Joseph Almeida, the provincial of Sri Lanka could not make it due to the travel restrictions while the two ex-provincials Fr. Jose Mathew and Fr. Joyce were special invitees. The Council used this opportunity to discuss and delve deeper into the six-year plan of the Rector Major and the relevant lines of action for its implementation. The Council has also taken up the budgets and proposals of the various networks of the SPCSA.

In the General SPCSA Assembly from February 27-28 Fr. Regional touched upon 'Salesian Leaders of the SPCSA and their Role in Transforming Systems' and 'Poverty Alleviation Plan'. We also took

up the Impact Analysis study of Salesians in the field of education by TISS. The rest of the days were dedicated to listening to the reports of the various networks like, DBYA, BOSCONET, YAR, BOSCOM, JPN, DB TECH, SAFC, Missionary Animation, DBSAI, Salesian Brother, DBHEI, SAFC and Salesian Family. The Council meeting ended on March 01, 2021. I thank Fr Bellamkonda Sudhakar for sparing time to join me at the SPCSA Assembly.

SDB INH - FIRST SOLAR POWERED PROVINCE IN THE WORLD

It gives me immense joy to let you know that during the SPCSA Assembly on 28 February 2021, Rev Fr Biju Michael, the Regional of South Asia has released the Energy Forever - mission accomplished poster of the Province of St Joseph, Hyderabad. Fr Biju Michael congratulated the confreres of the province on this innovative and futuristic venture. He had this to say, "the Salesian Province of Hyderabad has anticipated the dream of the Rector Major, Rev. Fr Ángel Fernández Artime of Energy Forever (2032) by 12 years."

In response to the global call of Pope Francis through Laudato Si, and the call of the Salesian congregation through General Chapter 28, crystallized in the 8th Priority of the Rector Major, "accompanying the young towards a sustainable future," we realized the dream of installing Solar Power Units in all the Communities of the province, thus contributing to the significant reduction of carbon footprint and moving towards sustainability. We have completed the process of adopting the renewable energy on January 31, 2021 in all the 31 communities of the Province with 65 Solar Units. This initiative will reduce 26,400 tons of CO2 produced to generate the same amount of energy through fossil fuel and spare 1,58,400 trees in treating the same amount of CO2 emissions per annum. I thank Fr Androth Jose, the provincial economist and Fr Sudhakar Bellamkonda, the PDO Executive Director for successfully following up the implementation of this initiative of the Province. I extend special thanks to all the rectors/leaders and the administrators of our communities for their collaboration in realizing this dream of the Province.

ADMISSION TO DIACONATE

I am very glad to inform you that the following clerics of our province studying theology at Kristu Jyothi College, Bangalore have been admitted to the diaconate ordination scheduled for March 18, 2021 at 10 am. I congratulate each one of them and assure them of our prayerful accompaniment so that they may continue to imbibe the spirit and mind of the Lord, to whose service they are dedicating themselves as ministers of the Eternal Word.

- CI. DASARI Shiva Johannes
- CI. DIBBAGALLA Raja Sekhar
- CI. KAKARLA Chandra Mohan
- CI. PRADHAN Ashish Kumar

TIME FOR ADMISSIONS

I request all the rectors and house council members to send the assessment (Scrutiny III) and application forms (for renewals and perpetual professions) of the young Salesians to the provincial office latest by March 19, 2021. Kindly send two admission forms along with the applications of those clerics preparing for perpetual profession. Let us earnestly fulfill the duty of guiding and accompanying our young confreres so that they become ever more mature and zealous for their Salesian religious vocation as they journey towards their final commitment to the Lord in the service of the young, especially those who are poor, abandoned and defenseless.

CONSULTATIONS COMPLETED

I am pleased to inform you that we have completed the rigorous task of compiling and processing the consultation forms for the appointment of Rectors. I thank every confrere who has taken the trouble to fulfill this simple, yet important duty of sending in his valuable suggestions by making an indispensable contribution to the process of identifying leaders and animators of local communities. A good number of consultation forms have arrived making our discernment both fruitful and effective in the selection of suitable confreres for the important task of animation and governance in our local communities so that these communities in turn may reach out to the most needy and defenseless youth in a spirit of unity and dialogue.

UPCOMING PROVINCE MEETINGS/EVENTS

First Death Anniversary of Bro Soosai Dennis

On 14th of March 2021 we will be celebrating the first death anniversary of Br Soosai Dennis at Sacred Heart Novitiate, Manoharabad. The Eucharistic Celebration will be held at 7 am followed by a prayer service at the tomb of Br Dennis. A few relatives of Br Dennis are expected to join the celebration. As we celebrate the first anniversary of his entry into heaven, let us fondly recall not only many wonderful memories but also the precious example of his life that he has shared with us and with the poor entrusted to his care. He will always be remembered as a hardworking Salesian who exhibited deep attachment to Don Bosco and to the Salesian Congregation. May he continue to intercede for us from the bosom of the Father.

First Death Anniversary of Fr Yeddanapalli Anthony Selvaraj

I would like to inform and invite you for the first death anniversary of Fr Anthony Selvaraj on April 09, at Sacred Heart Novitiate, Manoharabad. Due to Covid-19 lockdown at the time of his death, we could not gather together as a province to give him a fitting farewell. Some of his relatives are invited for the same. Let us gather together for a meaningful and fitting farewell for this veteran Salesian, who lived and nurtured the Salesian Charism till his last breath.

MARCH 01	WEBINAR Acting: Green Commandment VIII: "Educate toward Ecological Citizenship" by Rev. Fr Pallithanam Thomas SDB, Representative of the Rector Major and the General Council of the Salesians of Don Bosco, at the U.N., New York.
MARCH 11	WEBINAR Praxis Orientation: "Grounding Laudato Si' in the Sustainable Development Goals," by Rev. Fr Pallithanam Thomas and Team
MARCH 14	1 st Death Anniversary of Bro. Soosai Dennis
MARCH 16-17	Meeting of Rectors, Parish Priests, In-charges and Commission Heads
MARCH 16	Silver Jubilee of Priestly Ordination and Religious Profession of Confreres
MARCH 19, 2021	FEAST OF ST JOSEPH All admissions to renewals and professions to reach Provincial Office with Scrutiny III
MARCH 23-24	PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 09	1 st Death Anniversary of Fr Yeddanapalli Anthony Selvaraj

CONDOLENCES

We offer our heartfelt condolences:

- To the Provincial and the confreres of INK Province at the passing away of Fr Mathew Thekkekara SDB, who died at the age of 74 on March 01, 2021 at Mamma Margaret Home, Aluva

CONCLUSION

Repent and Believe in the Gospel

In this season of Lent, I invite you to meditate with me on this ongoing call of Jesus to repentance. The first kind of conversion is the one that resounds at the beginning of Jesus' preaching and is summed up in the words: "Repent and believe in the Gospel!" (Mk 1:15). Let us try and understand what the word 'conversion' means here. Before Jesus, converting always meant a 'going back' (the Hebrew word *shub* means reversing route, going back on one's own steps). It defines someone's course of action when, at a certain time in their life, they realize they are 'off track.' Then they stop, to think it all over again; they decide to go back to observing the law and rejoining their covenant with God. Conversion, in this case, has an essentially moral meaning and suggests the idea of something painful to do, such as changing habits, stopping doing this or that.

The second type of conversion is from our mediocrity and lukewarmness. Out of the seven letters to the Churches of the Book of Revelation, the one that we should meditate most is the letter to the Church of Laodicea. We are quite familiar with its harsh tone: I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth... Be earnest, therefore, and repent. (Rev, 3:15ff.).

In the history of Christian holiness, the best-known example of the first kind of conversion, from sin to grace, is provided by Saint Augustine; the most instructive example of the second type of conversion, from being lukewarm to being fervent, is provided by St Teresa of Ávila.

Let us ask the Mother of God to obtain us the grace she obtained from her Son at Cana of Galilee. Let us ask that through her intercession the water of our own lukewarmness may be turned into the wine of renewed fervor.

Yours in the Lord,



Fr Thathireddy Vijaya Bhaskar SDB,
Provincial

